



U.S. Department of Justice

Ronald C. Machen Jr.
*United States Attorney for the
District of Columbia*

*Judiciary Center
555 Fourth St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530*

PRESS RELEASE

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For Information Contact:

Public Affairs

(202) 252-6933

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Former Employee Pleads Guilty to Defrauding Non-Profit - Defendant Stole More Than \$95,000, Spent it on Travel, Other Personal Expenses -

WASHINGTON - Kimberly Nicely, 49, of College Park, Md., pled guilty today to a federal charge of wire fraud in connection with her theft of more than \$95,000 from a non-profit organization, announced U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. and Daniel S. Cortez, Inspector in Charge of the Washington Division of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service.

Nicely entered her plea before the Honorable Robert L. Wilkins of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. She is to be sentenced on August 24, 2011, and faces a statutory maximum sentence of 20 years of imprisonment. Under federal guidelines, Nicely likely faces a sentencing range of between 12 and 18 months in prison. As part of the plea agreement, she agreed to pay full restitution to the organization and also agreed to an order of forfeiture.

According to a statement of offense agreed to by the government and Nicely, The Fund for Peace hired Nicely in 2005 as an independent contractor to work as a controller. The Fund for Peace, which is headquartered in the District of Columbia, is an independent, nonpartisan research and educational organization that works to prevent war and alleviate the conditions that cause conflict. The organization promotes sustainable security through research, training and education, engagement of civil society, building bridges across diverse sectors, and developing innovative technologies and tools for policy makers.

Beginning in or about 2007, Nicely devised a scheme and stole money from The Fund for Peace by diverting money from the organization's bank accounts to her own personal use. She hid this conduct from her supervisor and others at the non-profit. On at least 21 occasions between 2007 and 2009, Nicely wrote a check on The Fund for Peace bank account to herself or to "petty cash," forged the signature of an authorized signatory, cashed the check, and kept the money for herself. Nicely also wrote two unauthorized and forged checks to an associate of hers. The sum of these checks was more than \$46,000.

Over the course of 2009, Nicely made unauthorized use of a Fund for Peace credit card, purchasing more than \$47,000 worth of items for her personal use. These purchases included

personal travel, meals, rental cars, and substantial cash withdrawals at a casino in West Virginia. In 2009, Nicely also used a Fund for Peace debit card to make almost \$2,000 in unauthorized cash withdrawals.

All told, Nicely took \$95,524.28 of the organization's money and converted it to her personal use by fraudulent means from 2007 through 2009.

In announcing today's guilty plea, U.S. Attorney Machen and Inspector in Charge Cortez commended the investigative efforts of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. They also praised the work of members of the U.S. Attorney's Office, including Paralegal Specialist Mary Treanor, Assistant U.S. Attorney Diane Lucas, who is handling the criminal forfeiture aspects of the case, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Bryan Seeley, who is prosecuting the case.

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